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1899-03-09

Letter from R[obert] U[nderwood] Johnson to John Muir, 1899 Mar 9.

Robert Underwood Johnson

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EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT
THE CENTURY MAGAZINE
UNION SQUARE NEW YORK

March 9, 1899.

R. W. GILDER, EDITOR.
R. U. JOHNSON,
ASSOCIATE EDITOR.
C. C. BUEL,
ASSISTANT EDITOR.

Mr. John Muir,
Martinez, California.

My dear Muir,

Mr. McAneny, secretary of the Civil-Service Reform Association, and Herbert Welsh of the Indian Bureau are going down very soon to Washington to see Hitchcock, the new secretary of the Interior. Before they go I am going to give McAneny some points with reference to the condition of the forest reserves. He will try to get them placed under the civil-service rules— or, at least, under a better system than now obtains. I will write a letter ^{to the Secretary} conveying the information you have recently given me.

The chief object of this letter, however, is to ask you what progress you are making on your autobiography for The Century, beginning with your life in Scotland as a boy. I am deeply interested in this, as we all are, and we want it for The Century. There is nothing that you could write with more ease, or with more interest to the public, and I hope you will lose no time in beginning it. We should be glad to print it, both in the magazine and in book form, and to make it worth your while to write it. Please con-

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sult with your wife (your best counsellor in such a matter), and let me hear from you.

After you have finished up the life of ~~the~~ boy and young man you can go into your California experiences. The thread of biography is merely to string upon it your observations of life, the awakenings of a scientific spirit, and the contrast between boyhood and manhood. If you do this in a frank, conversational way, you will be surprised to find how interesting it will be. *It will take its place as a classic!*

Yours faithfully,

R. U. Johnson.

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